

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office Action of May 11, 2006, claims 2-3, 6-11, 13 and 15-18 were objected to, but also would be allowable if rewritten in independent format.

In response thereto, the subject matter of objected to claim 2 has been incorporated into independent claim 1, and the subject matter of objected to claim 13 has been incorporated into independent claim 12. Hence, independent claims 1 and 12 should now be in condition for allowance.

Given the fact that amended claim 1 should be in condition for allowance, dependent method claims 3-11, which either directly or indirectly relate back to amended claim 1 and include all the limitations of newly amended claim 1, likewise should also be in condition for allowance.

Similarly, amended independent claim 12 should also be in condition for allowance, then dependent claims 14-19 which relate back directly to amended claim 12 should also be in condition for allowance.

In the Office Action of May 11, 2006, claims 1, 4, 5, 12 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Abe et al (US 6,066,879). However, in view of the amendment of independent claims 1 and 12, which include the limitations of objected to claims 2 and 13, claims 1 and 12 are clearly patentable over Abe et al. Similarly, claims 4-5 and 14, which are both directly or indirectly dependent from claims 1 and 12, are also novel, and therefore, patentable over Abe et al.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 4-5, 12 and 14 over Abe et al are courteously solicited.

In the Office Action of May 11, 2006, claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Abe et al. This ground of rejection is courteously traversed.

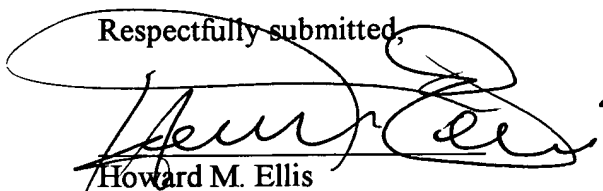
Claim 19 now includes all the limitations of amended and allowable independent claim 12, and therefore, claim 19 must also be non-obvious, and therefore, patentable over Abe et al.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 19 is courteously solicited.

In view of the amended claims, and the foregoing remarks addressing the various grounds of rejections and objection, this application should now be in condition for allowance, and notification of the same at an early date is earnestly solicited.

August 23, 2006

Respectfully submitted,



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